TOWN
&
OUNTRY
HURCH

These Papers

BECAUSE of wartime printing conditions, it has been found ecessary to issue TOWN AND COUNRY CHURCH as a bulletin without egular monthly frequency. We expect, however, to be able to make vailable a series of informal papers, nd to print nine of these issues in he course of twelve months, as we ad planned and promised. The Committee on Town and Country of he Home Missions Council, the Federal Council of Churches and the International Council of Religious Education asks you to be patient if opies do not arrive regularly.

Brief stories of what people are oing in local congregations and ommunities will be the chief feaures. The aim is to help put the vorker in the small community into ouch with numerous activities.

Part of Larger Program

The paper will be an important art of an enlarged "cooperative ural church program," that will enourage a national "rural church novement." The paper will be closey linked with a regularly held Naional Convocation on the Church in Town and Country.

This Issue
No. 14
Published January, 1945

The Way We Work Together

ROGER ORTMAYER

• Feeling that the set pattern of the ministry was not the way in which they wished to serve, but still desiring to keep the Methodist connection and serve within the denomination, five young ministers and their wives launched in the Spring of 1940 a Group Ministry Plan. They were being graduated from Garrett Biblical Institute and, under the leadership of Aaron H. Rapking of the Methodist Board of Missions and Church Extension, decided to stay together in rural work, locating in the North East Ohio Conference of the Methodist Church where they are now serving charges in Lake and Geauga Counties near the south shore of Lake Erie.

Central Fund

Speaking for ourselves, at the request of the Editor, we feel that the plan as it functions in the group has merit both in the matter of ministerial relationships and in the community and lay work. We have felt that if a "fellowship ministry" is to operate effectively, we should take most of our living within its orbit. We try for complete sharing financially. As a group the financial burden of each is shared by the group. The total salary is divided equally, depending upon the size of the family. A "Central Fund" is kept on hand for emergencies and group projects. Hospitalization and unusual medical expenses are shared.

We find stimulating activity in doing things together. New crafts, singing, arts, and challenging lines of study are followed. At present our devotional activities are outlined by a member of the group one week in advance, taking expressed problems of different members and dealing with them until that one believes he has found help. We assist each other with intimate personal problems as well as with those in the practical realm of church administration.

Regular Meetings

These things are accomplished by meeting together regularly on Mondays. We meet at the different homes and follow a program of devotional activity, work, play, and swapping plans and developing programs.

In the wider lay, church, and community activities the nucleus with which we work is the Fellowship Council, much as outlined in Rapking's pamphlet "The Group Ministry," published by the Methodist Board. Key leaders of the different churches meet together monthly at Sunday evening suppers to develop inter-charge work. From this has come such features as a complete survey of the communities, inter-charge singfests, combined church choirs, trading of lay speakers, cooperative youth work. Plans are now developing for a center which will have accommodations for overnight retreats, etc.

A program of pulpit exchange is followed, so that each man preaches in all of the churches at least twice a year. But while each is encouraged to become particularly efficient in some line of interest (one is an expert in recreation and surveys, another specializes in religious education and youth work, one in writing and preaching, another pastoral work), each has his definite parish. Each is the pastor of his people and is responsible for the direction of the churches to which he is appointed. We feel that this makes for an effective combination of the strong points of the larger parish plan and the more stereotyped form of ministerial placement.

Abiding Satisfaction

We feel that even if the outward results may not be spectacular, that as a way for ministers there are great possibilities for growth and abiding satisfactions in group relationships. It is simply an extension of the cooperative way of life. Together our effectiveness may not be four times as great as if we were alone, but it is measurably increased.

From the record, something can be said for the plan. Benevolence giving has increased over 50% in every one of the churches. Youth work has increased in interest even during the war time. Frequent get-togethers between the separate groups result in sustained interest.

One church has undertaken a $2000 project of sanctuary improvement and completed it for $700, the cost of materials, all of the skilled and unskilled labor having been donated. Another church is planning an additional improvement after putting $1000 into the plant, and a third church is planning a similar program. One congregation had present at worship services in the past year a number equal to more than 85 per cent of its total membership.

But of course the work of rural ministers does not stop with church interests. One couple visited every school in Geauga County organizing 4-H Clubs in cooperation with the Ohio State Extension Service. All of the group belong to the Grange and participate in the significant program of adult education carried on by the Advisory Councils of the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation. As a group and in cooperation with the administration of Hiram College, we have encouraged a conference on the small community in Northeastern Ohio. Leaders in the decentralist movement and small community economics took part in the two-day sessions.

In looking to the post-war years, we are trying to find a pattern that will work in the matter of the readjustment of the church in the small community to the dislocations of the readjustment period. It is not just a problem of agriculture or of jobs, but the problem of the small community whose agriculture is linked with the industrial situation! It seems to us that the group idea for ministerial leaders has much to recommend itself.

The participants in this Group Ministry are:

Rev. and Mrs. Joe Bell, Chardon, Ohio
Rev. and Mrs. Glenn Gothard, Thompson, O.
Rev. and Mrs. Eugene Hibbard, Windham, O.
Rev. and Mrs. Roger Ortmayer, Madison, O.

The Church of the Open Door

• Recently 106 prominent Negro church leaders submitted a statement to white churchmen making a plea for an "open door church." The document is available from the Commission on the Church and Minority Peoples of the Federal Council, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y., 10 cents per copy.

Every Town and Country Church Needs a Church Council

A. A Church council is a group of people chosen by the different organizations of the church to represent them in a committee that meets monthly to plan and administer projects having to do with the whole church program.

B. Every town and country church needs a church council because:

1. It gives over-all planning and direction.
2. It helps carry on the work as planned.
3. It gives continuity to the program (this is especially important because of the rapid turnover of pastors in the town and country churches).
4. It acquaints the new pastor with what has happened in the past and what the plan is for the future. The church advises with him and helps him to see their plans for the future and he will help them see his plans.
5. It appoints temporary committees to carry out certain specific tasks.
6. It broadens the base of leadership and tends to eliminate the oft repeated criticism, "So-and-so runs the church."
7. All will have more interest in the church organization because of their representative in the planning body.

C. There should be twelve representatives on the church council as follows: (Or all church and church school officers may make up the council.)

1. Church Clerk. 2. Treasurer or Financial Secretary. 3. One Trustee. 4. One Deacon. 5. One person under 21. 6. One person between 18 and 35. 7. One person over 35. 8. Two from the Sunday School. 9. One from the Women's Society. 10. One from the Missionary Society. 11. Pastor. 12. One from the Men's Organization.

They shall be elected by their representative groups for a three year term and shall not be eligible for re-election for a period of one year. In case of the young people, they shall be elected for one year only. If the young adults or men do not have an organization, the church shall elect representatives for them. The church clerk or council secretary shall keep an accurate record of all business, as well as a brief of the general discussion in as far as possible. The pastor shall be an ex-officio member and may, or may not be chairman. The church council shall appoint temporary committees to do the tasks at hand whenever there is not a regular church committee to do it, or in case of failure of the regularly elected committee.

They shall use the short term temporary committee wherever possible, in order to: 1. Broaden the base of relationship and participate in church affairs; 2. To tap the ability of those who will take a short job but will not take a whole year's responsibility. Many people feel burdened because they are on many prominent church committees. They do nothing all year, but when they are asked to assume a real responsibility they feel themselves too busy.

K. A. Roadarmel

What Do Farmers Expect?

• Staff members of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics recently discussed questions about the post-war period with 613 farmers in 32 widely scattered counties. Two-thirds of those interviewed were farm owners and the remainder were tenants and laborers. In the *Agricultural Situation, Washington,* the opinions of those interviewed were summarized as follows:

"Practically all of them expect a depression eventually, but a majority are optimistic about the immediate post-war years.

"A large majority want a continuation of price controls and price supports for at least two years after the war.

"A majority definitely expect to make major purchases when wartime shortages are over.

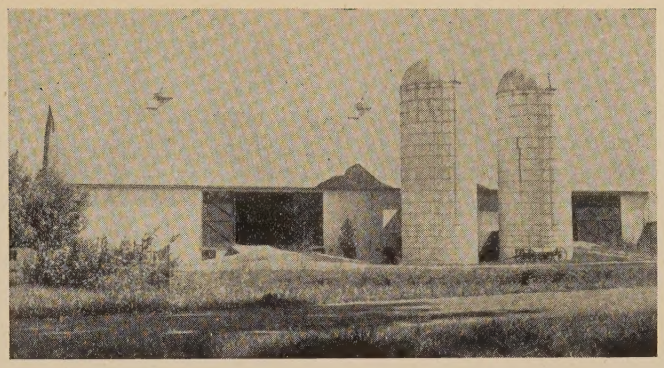
"Most now think that a large proportion of farm-experienced veterans who return to their local farm communities will be able to make a living, if not much money. Nearly all think the Government should help veterans get farms if they want them, or other work.

"A large majority want the school and health services in their communities expanded.

"Three-fourths think the United States should participate in a world association of nations.

"Two in three of the farmers interviewed think there will not be a depression during the first three years after the war — and half of these think the country is in for more of a business boom than now. They believe that the need for food by the devastated countries of Europe will maintain the present high demand for agricultural products for at least two years after the war. The third of the farmers who expect an immediate depression are largely of the lower-income group, frequently tenants and farm laborers. Farmers over 45 years old are more inclined to expect an immediate depression than are those who are younger.

"As to be expected, the hopes of about all the farmers center around a single wish—a continuation of wartime farm prosperity without war."



The Rochdale of America

• Recently a large celebration was held at Westphalia, Iowa, a rural community which is reported to be one of the most completely cooperative localities in the United States. Pope Pius XII sent a special greeting to those who were celebrating the centennial. Among those who participated were the Rt. Rev. Monseignor L. G. Ligutti, Executive Secretary of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, and the Most Rev. Joseph H. Schlarman, Bishop of Peoria, President of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference.

Bishop Schlarman preached a sermon, reprinted by the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, Des Moines, under the title, "St. Paul to the Galatian Farmers." Bishop Schlarman said in part:

"Listen to some of Paul's sentences: 'You have been called to liberty . . . . But if you bite and devour one another, take heed or you will be consumed by one another.'

"The Rochdale Pioneers wanted to make themselves their own employers and so they decided among other things: 'As soon as practicable this society shall proceed to arrange powers of production, distribution, education and government — or, in other words, to establish a self-supporting home colony of united interests, or assist other societies in establishing such colonies.' They wanted to be free and they wanted to be their own deliverers. They wanted to live and work in 'charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness.'

"Paul had freed the Galatians from the formalistic rites of Judaism of his day and so he writes to them the warning words: 'Stand fast, and do not be caught again under the yoke of slavery.' "

Improving Rural Education

• The recent White House Conference on Rural Education, held under the auspices of the National Educational Association, Washington, agreed upon an eight point program given below.

"A broad and powerful" school program is needed in every rural community of America, the educators declared. This program should meet these eight major points:

"1. Insure all ages of rural Americans their fair share of education.

"2. Produce vigorous, wholesome, balanced and steadily growing personalities.

"3. Strive for a community that sustains and nourishes democratic life.

"4. Demand dynamic and highly skilled professional leaders who can deal effectively with problems of rural communities.

"5. Provide adequate rural school buildings and grounds.

"6. Create satisfactory administrative and attendance units.

"7. Provide and equitable plan for financing rural education.

"8. Unite all the forces of the community in a coordinated effort."

Two Ministers Have Nine Goats

• At first our underground reporter sent in word: "Two ministers milk nine goats." On inquiry it was changed to the effect that Rev. George Crenshaw and Rev. William Stewart, who live together in a parsonage at North Fairfield, Ohio, have nine goats. When we inquired as to the number milking at the time of the report, the reply came: "About four." Memo to George and Bill: we hope this is approximately correct.

United Program in Maine

• North Jay is famous for its granite of fine quality. Grant's Tomb on the Hudson and some municipal buildings in Chicago were made of granite from its quarries. It now has one hundred people, but once there were four hundred and then it supported two churches, Universalist and Methodist. For one month Universalist services were carried on in the Universalist Church, with Methodists cooperating. For the rest of the year the Methodist Church carried on their own program.

With the coming of the present pastor, studies were conducted with the adults about what other small over-churched communities were doing. After a while the people said, "Why not try something?" Nearly a year has passed with the following achievements: one hundred per cent increase in giving for local work; two hundred per cent increase for missions; seventy-five per cent increase in attendance; a good Sunday School (none for several years); five received into the church, with more in prospect, and with it all a great increase in the numbers of workers and general interest.

Universalist ministers are heard about twelve Sundays of the year. The Methodist denomination supervises the program. Beyond this simple plan there is no organization. When the people are sure of the success of the plan, some more complete organization will be formed. The whole state is interested and more over-churched communities may try the plan. B. F. WENTWORTH

Religion and Top Soil

• Rev. Owen E. Osborne of Hillsdale, Maryland is author of a sermon "Religion and Your Top Soil," printed in a recent issue of *The Pastor,* issued by the Methodist Publishing House, Nashville. "If your farming has been simply for self—for what gain you could pull out of the soil, with little heed to preserving its rich qualities to pass on to another generation—I don't suggest that you give up farming simply because you have not shown respect for God's gift. I suggest that you turn your talents to 'farming for the glory of God!' "

Worship Seminars in Rural Wisconsin

• The Commission on Worship of the Federal Council of Churches initiated its program of worship seminars in rural areas with three in Wisconsin: Sparta, October 29; Richland Center, October 30; Rice Lake, November 5. Each of these seminars had a day's program presenting worship subjects and concluding with a hymn festival in the evening conducted by Professor Alvin F. Brightbill of Chicago. In addition to Professor Brightbill, those participating were Professor Rockwell C. Smith, Evanston, Illinois; Rev. Howard G. Wiley, Minneapolis, Minnesota; and Rev. Deane Edwards, New York, N. Y.

Those handling the seminar arrangements in each community were as follows: Rev. Frank J. Wright, Sparta; Rev. Edward C. Ward, Richland Center, and Rev. Archie R. Henry and Rev. E. L. Cooper, Rice Lake.

Plans are going forward for additional rural seminars in Wisconsin, New York, and Ohio.

Wickard for Family-Type Farm

• The family-type farm must remain "one of the chief foundation stones" of the American way of living, declared Secretary of Agriculture Claude Wickard to the National Farmers Union. He said the small farm "makes for fairer distribution of farm income, for better care of the soil, for better citizenship, and for happier living."

Mr. Wickard suggested that assistance be given to urban low-income families so that they could increase their purchases of farm products "through such means as the school lunch program or some variation of the food stamp plan." There must also be a most intensive search for new markets for farm products and an extension of the cooperative movement, Mr. Wickard said.

Patrons Go To Church

• The delegates and members attending the National Grange at Winston-Salem attended the First Baptist Church on the Sunday morning in November when the Patrons of Husbandry were in session.

Town & Country Church

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Remit to the Home Missions Council

Board of Editors

Rural Church Officers

The following persons with responsibility for town and country church in the religious bodies and interdenominational agencies constitute the *Board of Editors:*

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MARK A. DAWBER, Executive Secretary, Home Missions Council of North America.

HENRY W. MCLAUGHLIN, Department of Country Church and Sunday School Extension, Executive Committee of Religious Education and Publication, Presbyterian Church in the U. S.

HENRY S. RANDOLPH, Unit of Rural Church Work, Board of National Missions, Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A.

MARK RICH, Town and Country Work, American Baptist Home Mission Society.

CLIFFORD L. SAMUELSON, Division of Domestic Missions, National Council of the Protestant Episcopal Church; Chairman of the Committee on Town and Country.

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THOMAS ALFRED TRIPP, Town and Country Department, Board of Home Missions, Congregational Christian Churches.

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M. R. ZIGLER, Brethren Service Committee, Church of the Brethren.

BENSON Y. LANDIS, Secretary, Committee on Town and Country, Managing Editor.

An Expanding Rural Church

HARLEY HENDERSON

THE life of Burnside is closely interwoven with the interest of two other churches. A gradual advancement has continued since the day Rev. T. V. L. Harvey (now a chaplain) conceived the idea that three could live more completely than one. His conviction grew, budded, and finally burst forth into full bloom resulting in a unification of three churches. They are the Fort Dodge First Baptist, of which Mr. Harvey is pastor, Fort Dodge Riverview Community and Burnside Baptist.

City Minister's Initiative

Since neither Riverview nor Burnside were self-supporting the first church opened her purse strings, then contacted our State Convention for help, and finally called the Home Mission Society to meet the financial obligations evident in an extended unit. A parish preacher was called to minister in Riverview, across the Des Moines River, and Burnside, seventeen miles southeast of Fort Dodge, in a village of some twenty-five families. One point should be kept in mind: It was the city minister who conceived the idea, directed the procedure, and furnished the initiative.

Enthusiasm is contagious. Business men, laborers and farmers caught the spirit and led by a parish staff of two representatives from each church, plus a chairman chosen by them at large, and progressive ministers, the work moved forward. Burnside needed a house of worship; so plans were inaugurated to renovate a deserted Methodist Church. The First Church found an abandoned Baptist Church with beautiful stained glass windows still intact. What better contribution could it make than install these windows? Here was an opportunity to give material aid, and architectural appreciation touched by a calm spiritual radiance so alien to rudely constructed small churches.

New Building

Unwilling to sit on the sidelines, Riverview added her share and, each Burnside farmer applied brains and brawn. On September 27, 1942, a beautiful building was completed and by March 26, 1944, the mortgage became ashes. Riverview caught a spark from this glow and ignited her mortgage on June 4th. Then, not to be outdone, the First Church erased a debt of long standing to complete the family policy of financial liberation. The Fort Dodge Larger Parish had become a unity.

Three binding cords holding this unique organization together are common bulletin, annual picnic, and monthly parish paper. Not one of these things flash with a blinding radiance, but each serves a need and helps bind the whole into one vital organism.

Farm Organizations

Since Burnside is the locality under special discussion, the question naturally arises, what stabilizing and stimulating blessings emanate from it, or become vitalized through individual emulation? Perhaps, there is no better place to begin than the farmer himself. For several years, active farm organizations have endeavored to introduce better methods of farming in the community. Some farmers have been closely allied with the extension department in Ames, and others sent their sons there to school. Many of these leaders supported the church and in the course of years a close relationship developed between church, farmer, and college.

Ag. College

Today, a regular monthly periodical is sent out from the college which includes suggestions for the church, community gatherings, and better farming. A farm journal carries the Ames radio program and publishes valuable information on marketing, planting and other questions vital to farm growth. Burnside receives a certificate of merit from Ames whenever her church program shows definite progress in religious, civic, and social community channels. Three have been received in the past three years. A special Burnside radio broadcast given this October stimulated church interest and formed a closer link to the College.

A stabilizing feature in Burnside is the annual supper. This event brings the church and community together, as well as those members commonly on the fringe. A girls' chorus was asked to sing at the state convention in Pella. For over fifteen years, the men's chorus has rendered a service to church and community. Young people rally around Edna Mae Reed, a young woman serving as president of the Northern Associational B.Y.F.

What Meaning?

What is the meaning of local minute events? Simply this, the church is alive. It is doing things. Its outreach extends beyond a six mile radius and takes hold of world events. An expanding church must be a growing church familiar with the most progressive and adaptable methods suitable for fostering the work of its community and extending its influence to remote corners of the world.

Summing up this article in one paragraph it seems feasible to say

an expanding rural church needs: The extended hand of a city church. Cooperation and encouragement of state and national denominational organizations. Intimate fellowship with other localities such as the city and its problems. Channels for acquiring leadership and special speakers of prominence. Contact with an agricultural school so as to keep abreast of rural advancements. A definite method of participating in local problems. Not least among the things of importance, is an annual event that excels. Organizations worthy of praise, and individuals connected with some phase of the denominational program outside the local church. These are some practical steps for an expanding rural church.

Health on Farms

• Lowell Mellett, newspaper columnist, recently asked the Selective Service system for figures on rejections. He was told that in rural communities the proportion of persons rejected ran 46.2%, while in urban areas only 41.6% were rejected. Mr. Mellett goes on to say that "the farm figures are really bad." Between April 1942 and December 1943 the rate of rejections for farmers and farm managers was 56.4% and for farm laborers and supervisors 52.8%.

Use of Army Books

• Carl Vitz, president of the American Library Association, proposes that the millions of library books in Army camps be used for the purpose of starting rural public libraries. He suggests that these surplus millions of books can go a long way toward meeting the needs of 35,000,000 rural people who have no *local* public library service.

Are You Interested?

• Several persons interested in the country church and devotional literature would like to know if there is a need for assembling "travelling devotional libraries" that might be available for limited periods on loan to ministers in town and country churches. If you think there is a need, will you write a note to that effect to the Managing Editor?

Sam Higginbottom's Birthday

• Many local churches interested in the work of Sam Higginbottom, noted agricultural missionary in India, celebrated his 70th birthday on October 27, and thus took an active part in recognition of his work. Mr. Higginbottom retired as principal of the Allahabad Agricultural Institute on that day. Mr. Higginbottom's work on behalf of the farmers in India is well known in many of the Presbyterian Churches and in other denominations in this country. It is planned to raise a special fund of $155,000 to enable the Institute to double the size of its student body.

Catholic Lay Leaders

• The National Catholic Rural Life Conference sponsored recently at Green Bay, Wisconsin its first rural life day for the laity. The theme of the meeting was "Farming as a Way of Life." More than 5000 persons attended.

A Rural Life School for the Laity, also sponsored by the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, was held at Bismarck, North Dakota, under the leadership of The Most Rev. Vincent J. Ryan, Bishop of Bismarck.

Four Ministers from One Small Church

• From a small rural church of the United Brethren at Madisonburg, Ohio, have come four of the well known ministers of the East Ohio Conference of that denomination. They are Rev. L. N. Carmony, Beechwood; Rev. Emerson R. Hugh, Dover; Rev. F. W. Langell, Jefferson; and Rev. F. G. Reece, Akron. The Madisonburg church has a Sunday School of 70 persons.

Rural Church of Tomorrow

• Christian Rural Fellowship Bulletin No. 94, published in July, 1944, is entitled *The Rural Church of Tomorrow*. It is prepared by Aaron H. Rapking, Associate Superintendent, Department of Town and Country Work, Division of Home Missions and Church Extension of the Methodist Church. There is a discussion of cooperation between ministers and teachers and of home and community life. Single copies are 5c each.

Streamlining the Program

• In the *Adult Student* for November, published by the Board of Education of the Methodist Church, Nashville, is an article entitled "Streamlining the Rural Church Program" by Rockwell C. Smith of Garrett Biblical Institute. Streamlining must begin with the leadership, but there must also be adequate tools. Many of the conventional tools are not well adapted to the rural church, hence the task of the leadership is to devise adequate tools.

Youth Week

• Between January 28 and February 4, the United Christian Youth Movement will sponsor "Youth Week" as a united effort of Protestantism to win youth for the church. It is expected that about 3,000,000 Christian young people will participate.

U.S.D.A. Working Groups

• It was recently announced that there are, within the United States Department of Agriculture, 25 working groups assigned to formulate policies pertaining to post-war agriculture.

The Report For 1944

Committee on Town and Country

• The Committee on Town and Country, now representing three Councils, provides a center for planning, a means of pooling ideas and programs, and a device of collaboration for action among those in the constituency interested in the church in the numerous rural communities.

International Council Participation. The Committee, which began in the Home Missions Council in 1912, and was named by the Federal Council in 1931 "as its channel of operation in this field," was more formally recognized by the Federal Council in 1943, when one-half the time of the secretary was assigned to the Committee. In 1944, plans were matured for participation by the International Council of Religious Education. This opens the way, we believe, for making interdenominational experience in religious education more readily available to the churches in town and country.

Annual Convocation Established. The first National Convocation on the Church in Town and Country was held at Columbus in 1943. Immediately there was demand from the field for a regularly held annual meeting. An invitation from the Ministerial Association of Elgin, Illinois, was accepted for the 1944 session. The Convocation is an informal assembly of interested persons. It is a means whereby large numbers of persons may think and plan together and compare methods and goals, and educate and inspire one another. Fifteen continuing commissions consider almost all aspects of the work of the churches in town and country. The general sessions are in the nature of forums for consideration of opportunities, issues and proposed action. The various recommendations of the Convocation are referred to many agencies.

Paper for Rural Ministers. TOWN AND COUNTRY CHURCH is now published nine times a year in a concise eight-page format for $1.00 About 2,100 persons have paid for it. The main emphasis is upon methods of local church work, and it is designed primarily as a minister's paper. Only short articles are published. Much news is given in abbreviated form. Through TOWN AND COUNTRY CHURCH we aim to improve the administration of the rural church in all its phases and to assist the rural church to develop a Christian philosophy and program for rural life.

In-Service Training. Since 1912 the Committee has devoted time and attention to encouraging educational institutions to offer short courses that provide in-service training for ministers. The curricula have a practical bent, and supplement seminary training for those rural ministers who have been to seminaries. The rural minister probably needs in-service training at least as much as any other profession. As we look ahead to the post-war period, we plan to broaden and intensify in-service training.

Worship with Rural Emphasis. We continue to ask the local churches, urban and rural, to conduct two formal worship services each year that are both universal in appeal and rural in emphasis. Both are now regularly conducted in many churches. They are Rogation Sunday, the fifth after Easter, as Rural Life Sunday, a spring festival; and a Harvest Festival, any time between August and November. We recommend harvest festivals in churches separate from the national Thanksgiving. We issue annual orders of service for each day. A sub-committee is compiling "Songs of the Rural Spirit," a hymnal to supplement the customary church hymnals, which we expect the Federal Council Commission on Worship to publish.

Promotion of Farm Ownership. A sub-committee has been working for some years, exploring the relation of the church to the various types of land tenure, and will shortly issue a formal report. This committee has had the generous cooperation of the Farm Foundation and members of the staff of the federal Bureau of Agricultural Economics.

Extensive Collaboration. Much of the committee's work consists of relatively quiet collaboration with many other church agencies; *e.g.* those working on resettlement of Japanese Americans, or race relations, or service to sharecroppers and migrants; with Roman Catholic and Jewish organizations; and with a long list of farm and governmental agencies. We have cooperated in a field survey of Wisconsin towns, and are especially interested in field studies of rural situations.

Explorations. The Committee is considering how it may be helpful in assisting rural churches to advise service men who want farms . . . It is assembling information on the special problems faced by rural youth . . . It hopes to participate to the full in post-war interdenominational programs.

Three Main Aspects of Rural Service. Thus the three Councils which the Committee represents come toward the end of 1944 with rural services that have three main aspects:

A. Research, as carried on in the Federal Council's Department of Research and Education, the intercouncil field survey agency, and by denominational specialists.

B. The program of the Committee on Town and Country as outlined above.

C. The channeling of the services, whenever possible, of the numerous "subject-matter specialists" on the staffs of the three Councils who are responsible for general service to both urban and rural churches.

CLIFFORD L. SAMUELSON,
Chairman
BENSON Y. LANDIS,
Executive Secretary

Rural Lutheran

• The *Rural Lutheran,* organ of the South Dakota district of the Norwegian Lutheran Church in America, will be published six times a year for a subscription of 50 cents. Send all subscriptions to Pastor Albert Molberg, Hudson, S. D.

Selected American Rural Fiction

CAROLINE B. SHERMAN

Carroll, Gladys Hasty. Dunnybrook. 389 pp. New York, The Macmillan Co., 1943. $2.75.
An experienced novelist of rural folk recreates the lives of several generations of a New England family.

Eaton, Evelyn. The sea is so wide. 281 pp. New York, Harper and Brothers, 1943. $2.50.
Devotion to soil, farmsteads, and family is shattered by the evacuation of Acadia. The story is beautifully told.

Fuller, Iola. The shining trail. 442 pp. Duell, Sloan, and Pearce. 1943. $3.
Author of *Loon Feather* again writes of the thoughts, ways, beliefs, and rhythms of Indian tribes with appropriateness of word, rhythm, and simile. Both books have real beauty.

Flint, Elizabeth Canfield. The pine tree shield; a novel based on the life of a forester. 251 pp. Garden City, N. Y. Doubleday, Doran, Inc. 1943. $3.
An earnest but uninspired story of the development of the Forest Service as told by the wife of an early forester.

Gibbons, Robert. Bright is the morning. 339 pp. New York, Alfred A. Knopf. 1943. $3.
This is a well-knit story of family life with its loyalties and tensions. Some of the characterizations are particularly good.

Guy, Earl. Heaven is a sunswept hill. 220 pp. New York. The Macmillan Co. 1943. $2.50.
Remarkable and stirring narrative of small farmers in Mississippi fighting storm, breaking levees, and flood. Marked by devotion to land, family, and neighbors.

Harris, Bernice Kelley. Sweet Beulah Land. 389 pp. Garden City, N. Y. Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1943. $2.75.
Completes a triology of definite sociological content. People are this author's specialty in relation to each other and the land. *Purslane* and *Portulaca* were the earlier books—North Carolina the scene.

Leslie, Ann George. Dancing saints. New York. Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc. 1943. 307 pp. $3.
Sympathetic but penetrating novel of a decaying Shaker colony which, although the least progressive of the chain, suffers from the impacts of life as well as its own limitations. Apparently gives an unbiased and well-rounded picture of the group and its life.

Moore, Ruth. The weir. 342 pp. New York. William Morrow and Co. 1943. $2.50.
Island folk have ways of their own, essentially and inevitably rural although theirs is chiefly a farming of the sea. This island is off the Maine Coast.

Maier, William. Spring flight. 329 pp. New York. Duell, Sloan and Pearce. 1943. $2.50.
Rural Cape Cod and a girl who personifies it. The book is fresh, honest, and rather well done.

Mills, Charles. The choice. 424 pp. New York. The Macmillan Co. 1943. $3.
Influence of a Georgia plantation and way of life is so strong as to exert itself even across the seas. A complicated novel.

Moon, Bucklin. The darker brother. 246 pp. New York. Doubleday, Doran and Co. 1943. $3.
Thoughtful wartime novel of Negro life involving both the South and Harlem. Distinctly significant and worth while.

O'Hara, Mary. Thunderhead. 320 pp. Philadelphia. J. B. Lippincott Co. 1943. $2.75.
Horse story, on a farm in the Wyoming plains near an army post. Fitting sequel to *My Friend Flicka*. Family relationships count.

Steward, Ann. Take nothing for your journey. 333 pp. New York. The Macmillan Co. 1943. $2.50.
Perhaps an artistic but certainly a tortuous novel that involves the same people and revolves around the same Kentucky estate that motivated *Let the Earth Speak*.

Stuart, Jessie. Taps for Private Tussie. 253 pp. New York. E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc. 1943. $2.50 (illustrated, $2.75).
Humorous and human story of Kentucky mountaineers, probably not typical. Winner of 1943 Thomas Jefferson Southern Award.

• O Thou who dost not suffer us to be satisfied with little things, but hast set eternity in our hearts, lead us to the Spring of Living Water where alone our thirst can be quenched. Thou, who art the true Bread that comest down from heaven, feed our spirits with food of righteousness. May we desire more than all else to be righteous as Thou art righteous. *Amen.*

—"A Devotional Diary," Arranged by J. H. Oldham, Richard R. Smith, Inc., New York, 1930.

Landes To Merom

• Merom Institute, Merom, Indiana, "a regional center of Christian influence," announces that Rev. Carl J. Landes has been appointed director of extension work. Mr. Landes was once a minister of the Mennonite Church.

Many Leave Farms

• The nation's farm population has decreased by 4,748,000 persons in the last four years according to the annual estimate of the United States Department of Agriculture.

Southern Agencies

• The Southern Rural Life Council, Nashville, Tennessee, has published a directory of "agencies concerned with the quality of rural life in the South."

Future Farmers Foundation

• The United States Office of Education announces the formation of the Future Farmers of America Federation, Inc. "to stimulate and promote the best interests of students and former students of vocational educaion in agriculture." It is also announced that the treasury of the Foundation has received contributions from *The Country Gentleman* and the International Harvester Company.

Change of Address

• Experience indicates that many subscribers are failing to notify us about changes of address. If you are changing your address, please notify us promptly. A postcard will do.

Contributors

• Roger Ortmayer is a Methodist minister, one of a "group ministry," who lives at Madison, O.

K. A. Roadarmel is director of rural work of the Baptist Convention of the State of New York.

B. F. Wentworth is a Methodist minister in Maine.

Harley Henderson is a Baptist minister at Burnside, Iowa.

Caroline B. Sherman is editor of the Land Policy Review.

Contributions Wanted

• Every reader is a potential contributor of material for this paper.

We need three types of material:

(1) Articles of about 900 words (to fill a page), descriptive of a local program.

(2) Short items; news, plans, publications available.

(3) Illustrations; glossy photos, line drawings, cuts of rural scenes.

Circulars Available

• Quantities of circulars describing TOWN AND COUNTRY CHURCH are available without charge to any reader. Simply drop us a post card, letting us know how many copies you would like to distribute.